

THE KARABAKH FILE

(KARABAĞ DOSYASI)

The Karabakh Conflict has continued since the 1990s until today without resolution. During the initial years of the problem, Turkish authorities and diplomats spent serious efforts for a just resolution for the conflict. Information on those efforts is very few in our country. We decided to publish the information we could gather about those efforts. In this framework, articles by three retired ambassadors who worked on the issue are published under the title the “Karabakh File”.

The first article entitled “Still the Same Facts” was written by retired Ambassador Selçuk Korkud who was the head of the Turkish delegation in the Minsk Group from June 1992 until August 1993. In this article Mr. Korkud indicates that together with the co-chairmen, Armenians from Karabakh and Azeris were also invited to the Minsk Group when it was founded back in May 1992, that the Armenians adopted an uncompromising and irreconcilable attitude, that the utmost achievement during that period was realization of an agreement on the terms of reference of the team which would monitor the cessation of hostilities, however that the Armenian attacks continued and as a result, %20 of the Azerbaijani territories was occupied and around 1 million Azerbaijanis became refugees. Mr. Korkud also expresses that after a short while Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group, the USA, Russia and France continued their work, although with no significant results achieved.

The second article entitled “The Co-Chairmen System of the Minsk Group” was written by retired Ambassador Ali Hikmet Alp. Between 1989 and 1997, Amb. Alp served as the Permanent Representative of Turkey at CSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe). Since the Minsk Group, which was founded for the resolution of the Karabakh conflict, worked under the mandate of OSCE, he closely followed the activities about the issue. Still representatives from Ankara attended the Minsk Group. Mr. Alp explains how the Minsk Group delegated its duties to the three co-chairs (USA, Russia and France). As it was known by then that these three countries would avoid taking decisions that would put Armenia into a hard position, the co-chairmen system was not an appropriate system for the resolution of the conflict. As a matter of fact, the co-chairmen have not been able to make any progress in the last twenty years. Turkey should have rejected this system together with Azerbaijan. However, as Mr. Alp expresses in his article, Turkey approved the co-chairmen system for unknown reasons.

The third article was written by retired Ambassador Candan Azer and is entitled “Nagorno Karabakh and the Minsk Group”. As a member of the Turkish Delegation taking part in the Minsk Group meetings, Mr. Azer watched the activities of the Group closely. In his long and detailed article, he provides a brief history of the Karabakh conflict, after which he explains the ongoing clashes at the time and the negotiations for a truce and a resolution of the problem between the parties. He also mentions the attitudes of the countries in question as well as the personalities of some negotiators themselves. Our opinion is that the article by Mr. Azer will be a valuable resource for future academic studies about Karabakh.